progress reports for review and comment, receive draft report(s) and company written comments for review and comment, and, prior to issuance of the audit report, verify that the objectives were met (NARUC at Appendix C, Page 11). Rather, the Act clearly states, "The auditor described in paragraph (1) shall submit the results of the audit to the Commission and to the State commission of each State in which the company audited provides service." NARUC's proposals are intrusive, compromise the efficiency of the audit, and could jeopardize the independence of the audit process. There is likewise nothing in the Act that requires specifying the requirements for Requests for Proposals (RFP) recommended by NARUC (NARUC at Appendix C, Page 9). Companies have years of experience with the audit selection process and audits, including the independent Joint Cost Audit required by Section 64.904. There is no evidence that this process has not worked and could not work with respect to the Section 272 biennial audit. In short, NARUC's intrusive, controlling details exceed the statute's requirements, would compromise the auditor's independence, and would unnecessarily add to administrative costs.

The Wisconsin PSC (at 14) also recommends the NARUC audit guidelines apply to the annual compliance reviews required by

Section 274. Wisconsin PSC fails to recognize the statutory distinction between the biennial audit mandated by Section 272 and the annual compliance review mandated by Section 274. If Congress had intended the activity to be identical, the same language would have been used in both places. There is no need to specify how the compliance reviews should be conducted (Ameritech at 27, USTA at 27, Pacific at 33).

2. ELECTRONIC PUBLISHING

There is general agreement among commenters that any separated affiliate not subject to the SEC filing requirements should furnish a report containing the same information that would be in the SEC Form 10-K, except for information that is not relevant for a company not publicly traded. However, there are minor differences about what financial statements and additional information should be included. For example, Newspaper Association of America (at 4) does not specify what information is relevant. Pacific (at 33) indicates it should include the Balance Sheet, Income Statement, and Cash Flow Statement. BellSouth proposes the inclusion of operating information including a description of financing activities and results from the annual compliance audit (Bell-South at 41). Ameritech continues to maintain that the information should be limited to the financial information (i.e., Balance Sheet and

Income Statement) requirements. Ameritech further agrees with SBC that this information should be unaudited (SBC at 49).

IV. Conclusion

The Commission should not be diverted from evaluating whether there is a continuing need for the application of the Joint Cost Rules given the effective constraints of price caps and competition with matters outside the scope of this NPRM. With the deregulatory policy framework mandated by the Act, the Commission should use this opportunity to forbear from regulation or streamline the rules as proposed by USTA.

Or, at a minimum, the rules should be left as they are.

Respectfully submitted,

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September 10, 1996

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I, Todd H. Bond, do hereby certify that a copy of the foregoing Reply Comments of Ameritech has been served on the parties listed on the attached service list, via first class mail, postage prepaid, on this 10th day of September 1996.

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